

THE NAME OF A PROPOSED EASTERN RACE OF THE GREENSHANK

In a short contribution on geographical variation determined in the Eurasian Greenshank *Tringa nebularia* (Gunnerus), 1767: Trondheim, Norway, based on a study of the entire series in the collection of The Natural History Museum, Tring, during the course of a visit in September 1985, I advocated recognition of a far eastern race (see Clancey 1986, *Durban Mus. Novit.* 14: 8–9). Currently, this Palaearctic wader is treated as monotypic, but the extensive synonymy given in Hartert, *Vög. pal. Fauna*, vol. 2, 1912–1921, pp. 1614–1615, and Hartert & Steinbacher, *Ergänz.*, 1932–1938, p. 478, reveals that many earlier researchers were fully aware that the species varied morphologically to a greater or lesser extent. The Tring series revealed that far eastern birds in freshly assumed non-breeding dress were markedly paler dorsally than the western differentiates, with broader and whiter feather edgings to both the upper-parts and wings, and ranged somewhat larger in size (as determined many years ago by Vigors 1831). The breeding range of this eastern form of the Greenshank seemingly extends from Siberia east of the Yenesei R. to the Anadyr region, Kamchatka and the coasts of the Sea of Okhotsk, with transient birds occurring numerously after breeding throughout China and the Indo-Chinese countries to winter in Indonesia and the Philippines, south to Australasia. Only a single African specimen agreed with the eastern form, that being a skin from Mazabuka, Zambia (5 April 1932). Afrotropical material studied both at Tring and in southern African collections is characteristic of western breeders, which winter mainly in Africa and along the southern Asiatic coasts to the east.

In the 1986 contribution it was suggested the issue of a sub-specific name for the eastern race could be resolved by resuscitating Brehm's *Glottis albicollis* of 1855, with type-locality "Asia, north-eastern Africa, seldom in south-eastern Europe". On reconsidering the case, the over-riding requirements of priority and appositeness are seemingly to be better met by employing the much earlier *Totanus glottoides* Vigors, *Proc. Zool. Soc. London* 1831, p. 173: Himalayas, the type-locality here adjusted to the *eastern Himalayas* in order to embrace the far eastern Palaearctic breeders which pass through China and adjacent Indo-Chinese countries after nidification. This adjustment takes into consideration the widespread occurrence of nominate *T. nebularia* in eastern and peninsular India, as mentioned in the 1986 contribution, which clearly negotiate or otherwise circumvent the main Himalayan and Tibetan barrier to the immediate west.

The trinomen of the eastern subspecies of Greenshank will now stand as *Tringa nebularia glottoides* (Vigors), 1831: eastern Himalayan Mountains.

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